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CHARACTERISTICS OF THE JEWISH RACE.

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The Jews are the most wonderful people upon the earth. In all ages they have lived apart as strangers in a strange land, persecuted, afflicted, tormented, and yet by some inherent force they have always outlived their persecutors, and always given fresh proofs of the gifts God has bestowed on their race. The Egyptians held them in bondage, but the Egyptians have long ceased to be the rulers of the world, yet the Jews still live and rule. Their masters of finance are the bondholders of Egyptian loans, and the poor fellahin are to-day toiling hard for the descendants of Pharaoh's slaves. The Babylonians took them captive, but Babylon has fallen, and its land to-day is a howling wilderness, yet some Jewish Daniel is working his way into the favor of emperors and kings, and making himself a blessing unto his co-religionists, in a way that will embalm his memory for ever in their annals. The Romans conquered them, and scattered them throughout the world. They blotted out their nation from the map of the earth, but they could not kill this invulnerable race. A legend says that a Jew saved the copy of the Sacred Scriptures that was kept in the temple of Jerusalem. When the temple was set on fire by the soldiers of Titus, he rushed in, seized the sacred treasure, and escaped with it to foreign lands. From that day the Jews became The People of the Book. Their country was gone, their temple was gone, but the Book was still theirs.

When we review the history of the Jews from the call of Abraham to the persecutions in Russia, we can truly say, God hath not dealt so with any nation. (Ps. 147:20.) There must be something very enduring that can keep them alive through five thousand years, in the midst of such vicissitudes. The Empires of Asia, such as the Chinese and the Hindoo, may be as old, but properly speaking they have no history. There seems to be no progress, only for millenniums stag-

nation in the same social and religious state. But the Jews have always been in the van of progress. They have been able, also, to adapt themselves to all times and to all climes. They multiply in Egypt and Babylon under taskmasters and a burning sun, and they can now live and thrive in the midst of Siberian snows. This power of endurance, and this power of adaptation to changing circumstances, have not been given to all. They belong to the favored people. The English race can live and thrive in many parts of the earth, but it is doubtful whether they will ever become permanent settlers outside the temperate zone. The Queen of England is also Empress of India, but India will not remain an English possession for ever. Children are born to Englishmen in India, but these children cannot be brought up in that torrid clime. They must be sent home to England or they will die. This of itself means, that the English cannot permanently remain there. But the Jew is an Oriental, and he thrives well in Eastern lands.

As to antiquity, the Anglo-Saxon race cannot compare with the Jew. The history of the former goes back for a few centuries, and is lost in the dim light of the middle ages. But the Jew for thousands of years has a history in the clear light of the living world. During all those ages he has been the heart of mankind, and the eyes of all peoples have been turned upon him. Now there is something worthy of veneration in all this. We look with reverence on an old tree that for unnumbered years has withstood the battle and the breeze. Its gnarled trunk and its broken branches are a book, in which we can read its long and eventful history. How much more worthy of veneration are a people, whose ancestors were in the height of civilization while our own forefathers were naked savages; a people, too, who are not degenerated, but are refined and civilized to-day. Our nobility are very proud of a pedigree going back for a few hundred years. The oldest Scotch peer (Earl of Balcarres) can trace his descent to the twelfth century. But this is nothing for a Jew. The priests in the temple could trace their's back to Abraham. There is a certain toughness in the character of the Jew, that withstands the vicissitudes of time.

In conforming to the law of Moses, he is no doubt prolonging his own life and the life of his race, by being always on the side of God. The Law of Moses is eminently adapted to promote long life and prosperity. Many of its rules and much of its spirit are being borrowed by medical science to-day, in the department of the public health. The cry *sanitas sanitatum omnia sanitas*, is a Jewish cry. The washing of pots and cups is not a bad thing, when kept in its own place. It would be well for Christians if the spirit of the Mosaic legislation as to the care of the body in health and disease should enter into our practice. The need of cleanliness, the avoidance of unsuitable food, the observance of a day of rest, are as useful for a Christian as they are for a Jew, and as likely to make him live a long and happy life.

Another point in which they have no equal is the persecution they have endured. We all know what they suffered in Egypt and in Babylon. Josephus tells us what they suffered at the destruction of Jerusalem. But they were persecuted by the Roman Emperors, they were persecuted in England and in France, they were expelled from Spain, they were persecuted lately in Germany, and they are now being expelled from Russia. In England they purchased a few privileges for enormous exactions. But in spite of this they were considered rich. At a Parliament held at Northampton, while the assessment of the English people was £70,000, the assessment of a handful of Jews was £60,000. Again and again they were plundered. At last they were driven from the country. A ship captain, whom they had hired to convey their persons and their goods to the continent, as soon as he had loaded his ship with their valuable merchandise, sailed away without them. They called after him, but he replied in bitter mockery that as Moses had led their forefathers through the Red Sea, they could get him to lead them through the English Channel. In Spain they hid their treasures and feigned poverty. But the Inquisition was not to be deceived. Various methods of torture were invented, and among the rest a very cruel one to make them reveal their hidden gold. When a Jew was suspected to be rich and to have hidden his treasure, he was put in prison

and a dentist was sent every morning to extract a tooth until he revealed the place where the treasure was to be found. We read of a Jew submitting to have seven teeth taken out in this way before he was made to confess. In France they were subjected to the same persecutions. A band of shepherds rose up and scoured the land from one end to the other, murdering the Jews in every city and plundering their homes. In our own day these outrages of the middle ages have returned. The brutalities of the Russian mob, and the edicts of expulsion by the Czar, equal any that the bloodiest page of the past has to tell. Even Germany, the mother of ideas, the land of the Reformation, is every now and then inflamed with hatred of the Jewish race.

But there is one class of Jews that has been more kindly dealt with than the others. They correspond among Jews to the Protestants among Christians. A legend says they took no part in the death of Jesus. Their leaders were hated by the Scribes and the Pharisees, and were out of Jerusalem at the time of the crucifixion. These Jews, called Karaites, live mostly in the Crimea and have escaped persecution. It is said that the Russians, even in their wildest fury, pass over them, as the destroying angel passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt.

There are causes for these centuries of persecution. One of these causes is the hatred of the Christians towards the murderers of Christ. Abominable stories were spread abroad against the Jews. They were said to sacrifice children at their Passover feast. They chose the children of Christians and they used their blood in sacrifice. These stories were circulated by the Roman Catholic Church, and are not forgotten at the present time. In a book called "*Lives of the Saints*," by F. P. B., approved by Mgr. the Archbishop of Tours, and published there by Mame and Son in 1873, the following appears under date 24 March:

"Saint Simon, young child, martyr. The Jews of Trent, being assembled in their synagogue the Tuesday of Holy Week in the year 1472, to make preparations for their Passover which fell on the Thursday following, resolved, in order to satisfy their hatred against Jesus Christ and his disciples, to murder a Christian child on the day after their feast, being Good Friday. A physician among them undertook to furnish the victim, and chose Wednesday night to

carry out his horrible project, a time when the Christians were in darkness. Having at last found at the door of a house, a child alone, named Simon, aged about ten years, he coaxed him by caresses and brought him along with him. On Thursday night the principal Jews assembled in a chamber attached to their Synagogue, for their abominable work. Having put a handkerchief over the child's mouth, they made several gashes on his body, and caught in a basin the blood which flowed from the wounds : Some held his legs and others stretched forth his arms in the form of a cross. They then lifted him right upon his feet, although he was almost dead : two of the company supported him, while the others pierced different parts of his body with their awls and bodkins. Then when he had died they sang around him, ' Behold how we have treated Jesus the God of the Christians ; would that all our enemies were thus confounded for ever ! ' God permitted the discovery of a crime so atrocious and the guilty persons fully convicted were condemned to death. The synagogue was destroyed, and a chapel was built on the spot where the child had suffered martyrdom. God glorified that innocent victim by several miracles. Practice : Respect the innocence of children."

This event happened, not in Tours nor even in France, but in Lower Austria in the fifteenth century. Yet it is published in our own time with the approval of the Roman Church, for the instruction of the youth of France. These stories probably originated from the peculiar method of slaughtering animals followed by the Jews. They bleed them to death in a way that drains the last drop of blood from their bodies. About the time of the Passover they kill fowls after this fashion, and so it is not impossible that the killing of a fowl was magnified into the killing of a child, and the mysterious method of slaughter was changed into crucifixion.

But at times the church treated the Jews with great kindness. Indeed the popes of Rome have generally been kinder to them than the temporal kings of the earth. Yet their kindness had a purpose to serve. They desired their conversion. In some places it was necessary for them to attend church so many times a year. It has always seemed a sad thing that the very race of which Christ came according to the flesh should have utterly rejected him. The Church ever looked forward to the time when the veil would be taken off their heart and Israel gathered in. But again and again that hope has been disappointed, and the chagrin of men who have seen their best efforts put forth in vain has vented itself in deeds of hate.

A still more potent cause of persecutions has been the cov-

etousness of the Jews. From the day that Jacob bought Esau's birthright for a mess of pottage, the Jew has always been ready to take advantage of his neighbor in a moment of weakness. He is a supplanter. The strong combination we see in Jacob, of devotion to God, and underhand dealing with his neighbor, is characteristic of the race. Their chief aim is to make money, and they are willing to sacrifice everything to it. In early times they were the great slave traders of Europe. The captives taken in war were sold to some rich Jew, who carried them away to peaceful lands and sold them at great profit. Large fortunes were made, but great hatred was heaped up against the race. In early times, too, the Roman Church passed an edict against usury. No Christian was allowed to lend money upon interest. The result of this was that the Jews became the bankers of the world, and they continue in that position to this day. This also brought them much gain, but, being forbidden by the Church on the pain of damnation, it heaped up against them an equal load of contempt and hatred. In our own time they turn to the more lucrative occupations. In Russia they become money-lenders and tavern-keepers. In Germany the newspaper press is said to be monopolized by them. In England they are bankers, pawnbrokers, and diamond merchants. They were among the first to adopt that division of labor which has so greatly cheapened production, but has also cheapened human life, the sweating system in the clothing trade.

In face of these serious failings, what advantage hath the Jew? Much every way: chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. The prophets were Jews, the Saviour was a Jew, the Apostles were Jews. The Bible is a Jewish book, and the Creator of the Universe chose to be called the God of Israel. If Mary the mother of our Lord is blessed among women, the Jewish people is blessed among nations. They are a chosen people. Their advantages are great, their gifts are greater, and the benefits they have bestowed on the world are infinitely great. The Christian cannot possibly overlook the nation that has given him a perfect revelation of God, that has given him a Saviour, that has established for him a church, and has supplied the thoughts and words of a religious life to the world.

Some man will say they crucified Christ, and they are still unbelievers. True. St. Paul knew that, and what does he say? "For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid."

Nor did the benefits that the Jewish race conferred upon the world come to an end with the destruction of Jerusalem. They were the Bankers of the middle ages. They were also the Physicians. Maimonides, a Spanish Jew, became famous throughout the world for his knowledge of the healing art. Hebrew was an international language that bound the Jews of every country into one great family, and made their thoughts intelligible to each other. Many of them also knew Arabic, and all the treasures of Eastern learning were familiar to them. At a time when other nations were insulated and plunged in ignorance and superstition, the Jews were citizens of the world, and possessors of its highest learning and refinement. In modern times they have benefited us in a way we are beginning to recognize. The power of music, the most spiritual of all the arts, is recognized as a means of elevating and purifying the thoughts of the great mass of the people. But who are the great masters of music? They are Mendelssohn, Meyerbeer, Beethoven. They are Jews. And not only are the composers Jews, but the subject of their highest masterpieces are all Jewish, "Israel in Egypt," "The Messiah," "The Nativity."

The Jews are a chosen people yet—the most enduring, the most patient, the cleverest, and often the most unscrupulous, of men, an example of brilliant genius and wonderful attainment, a warning of the awful degradation and misery which genius can bring upon itself by rejecting the Chosen One of God.